

Plaque unveiled to honor lynching victim

By JEFF HORSEMAN
Staff Writer

For 90-plus years, the name Henry Davis had little meaning in Annapolis, relegated to obscurity by a city preferring to forget its racist past.

That changed yesterday when a group of around 50 men and women, African-American and white, dedicated a plaque at Brewer Hill Cemetery to Mr. Davis, a 30-year-old African American who 95 years ago became the city's last lynching victim. The memorial is the first of its kind in Maryland.

The ceremony under sunny skies stood in contrast to the events of Dec. 21, 1906, when a mob of around

50 men assembled behind St. John's College and invaded the Calvert Street jail in the dead of night.

Believing he had assaulted a white woman, the mob dragged Mr. Davis through the streets of an African-American neighborhood and hung him on the banks of College Creek.

The mob then fired around 100 shots at Mr. Davis, took pictures of his mutilated corpse — the photos were later circulated in postcards — and left it to rot. Mr. Davis' body lies buried in an unmarked grave in Brewer Hill Cemetery. No one knows exactly where.

Yesterday, Carl O. Snowden, who

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The Rev. Mamle A. Williams, second from left, gives a benediction yesterday at Brewer Hill Cemetery during a ceremony to dedicate a plaque recognizing the 95th anniversary of Henry Davis' lynching. Mr. Davis was the last man to be lynched in Annapolis. Some of those attending are, from left, former alderman Carl O. Snowden; civil rights lawyer C. Christopher Brown; Hazel G. Snowden, descendant of John Snowden; Mayor Ellen O. Moyer; and author and historian Vincent O. Leggett.

By G. Nick Lundskow — The Capital